



STATE OF WASHINGTON
HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

917 Lakeridge Way SW • Olympia, Washington 98504-3430 • (360) 753-7800 • FAX (360) 753-7808 • TDD (360) 753-7809

RESOLUTION NO. 03-39

WHEREAS, In its 2003-05 biennial budget, the Legislature directed the public baccalaureate institutions to prepare accountability plans for the 2003-05 biennium to achieve measurable and specific improvement each academic year as part of a continuing effort to make meaningful and substantial progress towards the achievement of long-term performance goals; and

WHEREAS, The Higher Education Coordinating Board gives responsibility to the institutions for setting meaningful targets; and

WHEREAS, The Board has reviewed the summarized plans for each institution, describing efforts implemented in 2001-03, performance data through 2002-2003, and strategies and targets planned for 2003-05; and

WHEREAS, The Board recognizes that the current accountability calendar, where plans are due (in August) prior to data availability (in October), is problematic;

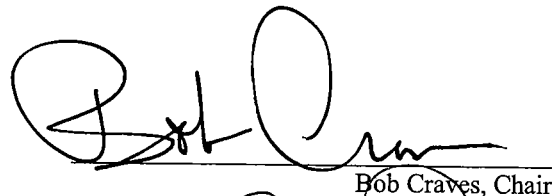
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board has reviewed the targets set in the 2003-05 accountability plans by each institution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Higher Education Coordinating Board recommends that the Legislature change the current deadline for submission of accountability plans and data to December.

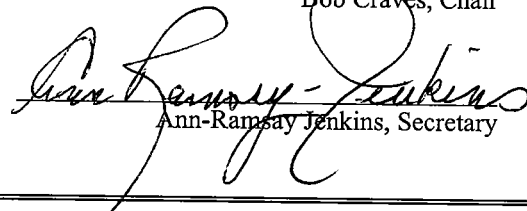
Adopted:

December 3, 2003

Attest:



Bob Craves, Chair



Ann-Ramsay Jenkins, Secretary




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December 12, 2003

TO: Legislative Fiscal Committee Members
Legislative Higher Education Committee Members

FROM: Ruta Fanning 
Interim Executive Director

**SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY ISSUES
FOR BACCALAUREATE INSTITUTIONS**

I am writing this memo to inform you of the Higher Education Coordinating Board's request to revise budget language related to accountability.

For several years, the state operating budget has required the HECB to report on the performance of the public four-year college and universities and their students in relationship to several statewide and unique institutional targets. The HECB is directed to set biennial performance targets for each institution, review the biennial accountability plans, and annually review actual achievements.

The attached report fulfills the HECB's legislative responsibilities, but the members of the Board have directed the staff to convey their concern with important elements of the current accountability process.

In particular, the Board is concerned that much of the data needed for the accountability plans are not available to the colleges and universities until mid-October. Therefore, the current legislative deadlines do not allow sufficient time for the Board to review and report on institutional progress.

The Board's accountability resolution (attached as Resolution 03-39), describes the Board's action on accountability at its meeting on December 3, 2003. If the current accountability process is continued in future biennia, we would ask that the budget language be changed to improve the process for gathering data about higher education performance and preparing timely and accurate plans. Specifically, we ask that the deadline for the accountability report be changed to December, and that the language requiring the HECB to "set" biennial performance targets be revised to more accurately reflect our role of reviewing and approving the institutions' biennial performance targets.

Memo to legislators re Performance Accountability issues
Dec. 12, 2003
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Finally, we would like to comment on accountability and its relation to the state's Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education. In the future, it will be vital for the state to link performance accountability efforts directly to the goals and strategies in the Strategic Master Plan. For example, if reducing the amount of remedial education required for high school graduates is specified as a strategy, then the HECB and the institutions should be expected to work together to track the performance of students and the colleges and universities. In addition, future accountability efforts may be influenced by the Legislature's ongoing discussions about the feasibility of developing "performance contracts" between the state and its public colleges and universities.

The HECB's 2004 interim strategic master plan addresses these issues and will be discussed by the Legislature during the 2004 session. We look forward to working with you to integrate the state's higher education goals with its performance measurement and accountability systems.

RF:NO:bv
Attachment

cc: Members of the HECB
Fiscal and higher education committee staff